

Applicant: Yoshinobu MACHIDA et al. Conf.: 1179
Appl. No.: 09/889,847 Group: 1774
Filed: July 23, 2001 Examiner: L. Ferguson

For: METHOD FOR MANUFACTURING ABSORBENT ARTICLE AND
CONTINUOUS MEMBER USED AS PART OF ABSORBENT
ARTICLE

INTERVIEW NOTES
NOT FOR ENTRY
May 29, 2003

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1. (Amended) A method for manufacturing an absorbent article comprising the steps of continuously feeding out a long, extensible, continuous member from a predetermined position and conveying, cutting said continuous member into lengths each equivalent to a length of one sheet of aid absorbent article at a predetermined position in a conveying path, and fixedly arranging said cut continuous member at a predetermined position of said absorbent article,

wherein a predetermined pattern is preliminarily printed on said continuous member with an inline printing machine at a printing pitch shorter than the cutting length of said continuous member, and the speed for feeding out said continuous member is controlled such that said predetermined pattern is located at a predetermined part of said cut continuous member,

thereby obtaining the absorbent article in which said predetermined pattern is arranged at a predetermined position.

Support for this amendment to claim 1 can be found on page 10, line 11.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. 112, 1st and 2nd paragraphs

There are objections to the phrase "other continuous members" of claim 2. Also, there is the question as to whether the skilled artisan would be able to join the continuous member "7" with "other continuous members" based on the disclosure.

The present invention is drawn to making shorts-type disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, incontinent pads and the like. Accordingly, the specific "other continuous members" include but are not limited to:

- 1) a non-woven fabric partly subjected to hydrophilic/water-repellent treatment, a film/paper/non-woven fabric provided with a partly large or a plurality of small openings, peelable paper or film (see page 12, second full paragraph);
- 2) absorbent core, a top sheet, an outer layer sheet (see the paragraph bridging pages 11-12);
- 3) a long absorbent core forming sheet, (see page 7, line 16); and
- 4) a fastening tape (see page 10, line 6).

Issues under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Brandon et al. US 5,766,389.

Brandon et al. does not anticipate the present invention, since Brandon et al. fail to teach an "in-line printing machine."

Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)

On February 21, 2002, we filed an IDS which listed US 4,323,069. It is possible that the Publications Department, when publishing the patent issuing from this application, will overlook the fact that the Examiner has considered this document. Accordingly, we will enclose a supplemental PTO-1449 form (listing US 4,323,069) with our response and request that the Examiner signs and initials the PTO-1449 form.